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HOW TO... Catalogue your DVDs

Maintaining a definitive list of the DVDs you own can be hard work. Emma Taylor introduces DVDSpot, a free online service that catalogues all the information you'll need

How many DVDs do you own? How many have you rented? If you find it hard to keep track, DVDSpot can help. Its free service allows you to keep a catalogue of all the DVDs you've watched, or want to watch. What's more, your catalogue isn't just a simple list. It also contains a picture of the DVD's cover, a synopsis, runtime and other details including a cast list.

1 To get started, go to www.dvdspace.com and click on the Register link in the top left-hand corner. You'll need to sign up, then click on the link in an email sent to you to activate your account.

Once this is done, log in. If you're the only one who uses your computer, tick the box next to 'keep me logged in' so you don't have to enter your username and password next time you visit.

2 To add a DVD to your catalogue, enter its name in the DVD search box in the top right-hand corner. It is also possible to search using the title's UPC number (the universal product code found on North American barcodes). When you've entered your search you'll get a list of possible matches. If you click on a title in the list, you'll be able to see additional information about the DVD, as well as DVDSpot statistics such as the number of other members who own it, watched it or are planning to buy it one day.

To add the movie to your collection of owned DVDs from this screen, click the Go button in the My Collection section. If you want to add it to your wishlist or watched list, click on the menu next to 'Add this DVD to my'. These options to add the DVD to your catalogue are also available on the first search page.

3 Next, enter some details about your DVD. You don't have to, but it's a good way to personalise your entries. When you've finished, click Save. In the future you'll be able to make a note of when you've watched this DVD again, and keep track of it if you lend it to someone.

If you want to make any changes to the information you entered for this title, click Edit. This screen also allows you to choose to keep the DVD entry private.

4 Click on the Front Page tab at the top of the screen, and then on the Manage Membership button. Here, you can make your entire collection private, as well as make alterations to your profile. You may already have a list of your DVDs on your computer. If it is in a word-processor file, open it and select Save As from the Edit menu. Save it as a .TXT file. If it's a spreadsheet, save it as a .CSV file. Back at the DVDSpot My Spot page, click the Import from File button. Scroll to the bottom of the page, and click on Browse to find your file. Then click Start.

